

would like to point out that the quotation of the definitions of stamp is not exactly as it appears. In particular, definition 16 states "an official mark indicating genuineness, validity, payment of a duty or charge, etc." Definition 17 of stamp sets forth "an official seal or device appearing on a business or legal document to show that a tax has been paid." In neither of these definitions, or any of the other definitions provided by Random House does it state that a stamp is an official mark on a business or legal document.

A stamp to which the present invention is directed is a postal stamp issued by official postal authority. In this regard, applicant refers to the numerous places in the specification which there is reference to official postal stamp. In particular, on page 1, lines 6-17, page 3, line 23, and page 8, line 8.

Enclosed herewith the Examiner will find a copy of the definition of stamp as set forth in the Webster New College Dictionary, Copyright dated 1995. Definition 4a states that "A small piece of paper that is sold by a government for affixing to an article to be mailed: POSTAGE STAMP." This is consistent with the specification and within the meaning of the present invention.

It is clear from the specification that the stamp to which the present invention is directed is a postage stamp and not a document having an indicia thereon, such as disclosed in Gasper et al. The suggestion that Gasper et al. teaches a stamp in its' broadest stamp is not based on any reference in the Gasper et al. reference or any other known reference definition of stamp. The definition of stamp as set forth in the 1995 edition of the Webster New College Dictionary is clear as to the meaning and understanding of "stamp". Furthermore, the section cited by the Examiner with respect to the definition of stamp is not directed to merely a document having indicia thereon but one wherein there is provided an official mark or an official seal or device appearing on a legal or business document. It is respectfully submitted that the Gasper et al. reference does not teach or suggest a "stamp" in the context to which the present invention is directed.

Applicant would like to further point out that independent claim 12 has numerous other limitations not taught or suggested by the prior art. It is well known that each and every limitation claimed is to be considered by the

Examiner. Furthermore, as set forth in MPEP 2173.05g, even functional limitations that are set forth even at the point of novelty, are to be considered.

In the present invention, the stamp is directed to not any ordinary type of stamp but a limited edition stamp. In particular, independent claim 12 includes the limitation "a first indicia identifying said limited edition stamp as being a limited edition,". Thus, the Gasper et al. reference does not teach this first limitation. Furthermore, a second limitation not taught or suggested is that claim 12 includes a first indicia comprising a "unique ID" that includes a limited edition stamp as being one of a predetermined number. There is no teaching or suggestion in Gasper et al. of providing a limited edition stamp and thus, it could not teach the limitation that there is provided a "unique ID" that identifies the limited edition stamp as being one of a predetermined number. Third, claim 12 provides a second indicia not visible under normal viewing conditions for confirming that the limited edition stamp is a valid limited edition stamp. There is nothing to indicate that Gasper et al. teaches or suggests the providing of "an indicia not visible under normal viewing conditions for validation that the stamp is a limited edition". Thus, it can be clearly seen that the Gasper et al. reference could not teach or suggest the invention nor would it be obvious as there is no teaching or suggestion in Gasper et al. or any of the other references cited for producing the above three features of the claimed invention.

Further, as previously pointed out, the limitations set forth in applicant's invention are not simply mere indicia as suggested by the Examiner but provide definitive structural features that have some functional relationship with the stamp. In particular, the indicia identifies that the stamp on which the indicia is a limited edition stamp. The indicia also provides structural features in identifying which number the limited edition stamp is one out of a predetermined number of limited edition stamps. The indicia further provides information for validation that the stamp is limited edition stamp. The indicia further provides a structural relationship in that the indicia is not visible under normal viewing conditions. So, the claim clearly provides structural relationships between the indicia and the stamp itself. Thus, *In re Gulack* would not prevent the patentability of the present invention.

With regard to the rejection of claims 19-22 and 30-33, these are dependent claims which depend at least ultimately on independent claims which are clearly distinguishable over the cited reference.

In view of the foregoing applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Attorney for Applicant  
Registration No. 27,370

Frank Pincelli/djw  
Rochester, NY 14650  
Telephone: (716) 588-2728  
Facsimile: (716) 477-4646

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